

"These reflections are dedicated to angry, scared, and desperate people everywhere. Even if we haven't met you yet, we care about you. The first and most important thing you can do to help create a better world is to survive. Thank you for everything you've done to survive until now, whatever you had to do. Let's find each other and create a world without police or homophobia, in which education is not a commodity and human life is not held cheap."



It's A Sin To Kill *A Mockingbird*

Writings on Scout Schultz, Queer
Anarchist Killed by Georgia Tech Police



IT'S A SIN TO KILL A
MOCKINGBIRD



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On Friday, September 16 2017, 21-year old Scout Schultz was shot and killed by police at the Georgia Institute of Technology. Scout was active in campus LGBT groups and identified as intersex. Scout was a part of local organized antifascist initiatives and was an anarchist. When news spread of their death, friends, family, and classmates near and far began scrambling to understand the events. In video surfacing online, it is possible to watch Scout scream at officers to “shoot me,” which they thoughtlessly do. In the coming days, a flurry of statements, rationalizations, and arrests are unleashed after mourners set fire to a police cruiser and clash with cops following a vigil on campus.

In the wake of the repression as well as the suffocating culture on campus, wherein students, faculty, and cowards of all stripes came out to defend the shooting, or to oppose those who sought proportional response to it, Scout’s former partner Dallas took their own life. Following a series of arrests and detentions, a friend and comrade of Scout’s, Kirby Jackson, took their own life as well.

As of this publication, the arrestees from the night of the riot have either had charges reduced or dropped and none are set to serve jail time. No one has been convicted for vandalizing squad cars or burning the police cruiser. The officer who killed Scout, Tyler Beck, is still on duty.

The legacy of this tragic sequence is in your hands now, dear reader. For Scout, for Dallas, for Kirby, and for the rest of us: be fierce, be swift, be cruel.

FURTHER READING:

“After Georgia Tech Police Perpetrated Shooting of Non-Binary Student, Atlanta Police Crack Down on Student Dissent” by Candice Bernd, Truthout.org

“The Trigger Effect” by Hallie Lieberman, Atavist Magazine

“Ghosts” by Otherworlds Review, Second Issue

The CONTEMPORARIES PROJECT is an organ of the Atlanta commune. Under other names, and sometimes under none at all, we have produced posters, leaflets, reports, and a newsletter. We operate in the autonomous areas of life and revolt, where control breaks down, where representation is routed, and where worlds are in formation. This pamphlet has been produced to respond to a general need among many comrades for greater historical perspective. As the global sequences of events have rushed forward with greater and greater frequency since the late 90s, and especially since 2011 - from the riots against globalization in Seattle and Genoa to the explosions in Ferguson, Istanbul, and beyond - it has become difficult to transmit historical lessons to the newer comrades at a time when it is most desperately needed. This pamphlet is one of many contributions to the situation, responding to sensible needs and not to ideological reflex.

This is the fourth text in our CONTEMPORARIES series.

*"Scout Schultz Was a Burning Flare" originally on Maskmag.com
 "Remembering Means Fighting" originally on Crimethinc.com
 "Resistance for Scout" originally on Itsgoingdown.org
 "Would it Have Been Different" originally on Yaboo News*

The body, title, and headers of this text is set in Hoefler Roman, with its beautiful Swash. The sub-headers are set in Univers 65.

Available online at <https://thecontemporariesproject.tumblr.com>

09.22: A small vigil takes place on campus, surrounded by right-wing hecklers and militarized police. A small teach-in occurs at which students and staff vent their frustrations. Over the weekend, a faculty meeting with the administration explodes as teachers and staff yell at the president and board of regents for not taking responsibility for the students death.

09.27: A Georgia State University student is arrested on campus for alleged involvement in the vigil and subsequent demonstration. Two people throw hundreds of fliers around the Georgia Tech career fair reading "We Remember Scout Schultz - executed by GTPD" and "No Apologies!" with the image of a burning police cruiser.

09.29: Another GSU student is pulled out of class and arrested by GTPD.

09.30: Dallas Punja takes their own life, fearing police repression and grieving over Scout's killing.

10.02: A third GSU student is arrested in connection with the vigil.

10.11: Protesters hold banners and pass out fliers outside of mayoral forum at the Ferst Center on campus, demanding charges be dropped against protesters.

12.06: Kirby Jackson, facing charges related to the revolt on GT campus, takes their own life

Appendix: Timeline of Events

09.16.2017: Scout is shot and killed by GTPD on campus

09.18 A massive vigil gathers on campus. Following the vigil, a masked crowd clashes with police and burns a police cruiser. That night, a report entitled “*Tonight is For All of Us*” is posted to the anarchist counter-information site *It’s Going Down*, which reads, in part:

“As the sky darkened, student bureaucrats lost control of the vigil as students and friends of Scout began to shout out their feelings, their despair, their rage. A large section of the crowd began assembling and chanting anti-police slogans while adorning masks. The masked contingent was around 100 people. Masked demonstrators quickly began lighting fireworks, flares, and smoke bombs to the cheers of the crowd. Flares and smoke bombs were thrown at the police cruisers on Tech Parkway who sped off. When the crowd arrived at the police headquarters, the confrontation took a decisive turn....Police began antagonizing the crowd, which then encircled a police cruiser. Scuffles broke out in the crowd with police. In defense of a fellow protester, someone emptied a fire extinguisher on a cop. Demonstrators smashed the windows of police cruisers and attempted to defend themselves while police beat protesters with the help of at least one white ‘patriot.’”

09.19 The GT Marksman club celebrates the police on campus while administrators and police initiate a repressive campaign against the movement. Throughout the week, the neo-fascist organization Identity Evropa distributes posters and stickers around campus parroting the discourse of administration and police.

It’s A Sin To Kill A Mockingbird



SEPTEMBER 2018

plenty of people [from the Georgia Tech community] who belonged in that protest.

Now a lot of students are being very pro-GTPD, and a lot of it has been very anti-Scout and sort of shaming Scout.

There's a part of me that wonders, if Scout was more gender conforming and less different looking, if it would've been different. But it's not like the shooting specifically happened because Scout was Pride president, you know? But also, it's not like Scout wasn't a queer and gender-nonconforming individual going to that situation. That is a difference, and it's still important to mention how it might have played a role in what happened.

Campus as a whole needs a lot of improvement, as does society. But I think we're a reflection of the America we live in, which also has some work to do.

Did Scout get what they wanted? I would say that the job of the police is not to kill someone. Scout may have wanted to die, that's true, but it didn't have to be the police's job to kill them. It shouldn't have been Georgia Tech that did it. I mean, ideally, no one should have. I don't think there's any situation in which one person should end the life of another, regardless of whether they're asking for it or not.

The mental health services offered on campus right now just don't have enough depth. You can only get 16 sessions with the counseling center, and then you have to wait a full calendar year before starting more — which can be fine for stuff that's very temporal, but not for more ongoing issues. Plus there are not enough counselors. It always books up. So if you have an invisible illness — depression or anxiety or panic disorder or anything that might interfere with your ability to deal with class — it can be difficult to get the accommodations necessary.

This came up on Monday night after the vigil. The vigil was very nice — it was a candlelight thing, a very moving, symbolic gesture. It was something Scout would've hated, as Scout was much more the type for action. At the end of the vigil, several students who were very upset at how they've been treated, and trans students who knew Scout very well, were talking about how we can make campus better and safer for trans students and how we can make things better, mental-health wise, for students. Stuff like, "The president makes a million dollars a year, but we can't afford enough therapy for the student body?" People were venting, there were maybe 50 to 100 people.

Then it turned into a march over to GTPD headquarters, and it was tense — there's a lot of anger about how they treated Scout, plus anger at police in general across the country. Then a protester got on the hood of a police car. GTPD did not tell her to get down, they did not warn her that she would get arrested, they just grabbed her, dragged her off the hood and put her in. ... She looked to me like she was choking. That's when things turned more violent, when someone lit the car on fire, when people were trying to get involved more directly against the police, who were now moving into the crowd and grabbing people and harming them. Three people were arrested.

The media keeps saying that a lot of people at the protest were not students — just out-of-towners looking for a fight — but a lot of people there were students. I saw

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SCOUT SCHULTZ WAS A BURNING FLARE

I write with an intense fear that my friend and comrade's memory will be forgotten, whitewashed, and erased. I wish to make it clear that Scout Schultz was an anarchist, a revolutionary, and a comrade I could trust with my life. I write this in spite of the cowardice of liberal friends and acquaintances who fear that such radical tendencies would be relegated and dismissed to the realms of madness by institutional voices.

I first met Scout in the fall of 2016 on a dusty train yard east of Downtown Atlanta. Dozens of comrades gathered to shut down the flows of capital, in solidarity with the water protectors fighting the construction of the DAPL pipeline, and Scout was among them. The atmosphere of that night was one of intense love and solidarity. A few of us living near or around Georgia Tech met each other for the first time that night, and were animated by the strength of our collective power. After establishing our connection, we made sure to get each other home safe. Scout was brilliant then, helping us stay level-headed despite fears of state surveillance and any other repercussions we may face for making this great empire our adversary.

Within days, we saw the election of president Donald Trump. Despite their physical disability, Scout marched alongside us that Wednesday and Friday night in the spontaneous demonstrations of popular resistance. Together, we printed and distributed anti-capitalist handbills, and went out into the streets to express our rage. When one of our crew was hurt that Friday night, it was

a little about it, but we never had a real heart-to-heart. We were friends — we were more than acquaintances — but not best-best friends.

From having talked a lot with a closer friend, I know Scout had apparently talked about how, if ever attempting suicide again, suicide-by-cop might be easier. So apparently Scout was the one that called police saying there was a threatening person on campus.

Before they did that, they dropped off some stuff for their closest friend — a box of Magic cards — and then went out and had a multitool in their hand. It wasn't extended, and it was a really shitty multitool too. At a party once I asked to borrow it for the bottle opener and they lent it to me and I had to give it back because I almost broke it and couldn't open the bottle. But it was metallic and flashy and they had it in their hands and were yelling, "Shoot me," all the stuff you've seen online.

I shouldn't have watched [the video] but I did. If I were to make a bracket of people getting into one-on-one fights, Scout wouldn't be a very high seed. How were you threatened by Scout enough to have to kill them?

It's come out that the cop that pulled the trigger hadn't undergone any sort of crisis [training], and that has been my biggest thing. Watching the video, they just yell at Scout multiple times, "Put down the weapon! Put down the weapon!" There wasn't any attempt of like, "Hey listen, we know you're going through something, we can help you," none of that. People don't generally like to be angrily yelled at, people tend to feel threatened when angrily yelled at. It wasn't helpful for sure.

And then also there were many more armed cops than there were Scouts, and even if Scout couldn't be talked down, I'm incredibly surprised that the cops couldn't have wrestled Scout to the ground, or found some nonlethal way of ending that situation. We just found out the officer's name [on Tuesday], and we still don't know if they're suspended or if they're still working.

IF SCOUT WAS MORE GENDER-CONFORMING, WOULD IT HAVE BEEN DIFFERENT?

Editors note: The following article was written by a friend of Scout's, Kirby Jackson, and appeared on Yahoo News on the 20th of September 2017. Kirby was pulled out of class one week after the publication of this article and indicted on charges related to the revolt on campus. On December 6th, 2017, Kirby took their own life, just two months after Dallas did the same.

I saw Scout just the week before [the shooting] and everything seemed fine. We played board games, we hung out, we laughed, and everything seemed okay.

There are only so many queer people on campus and we made friends, mostly through mutual friends and similar interests — Dungeons & Dragons, and gaming, activism, political beliefs. We're both trans, and we're both pansexual [attracted to all sexes and genders]. So we connected in those ways.

Scout was incredibly ardent and well educated and knew that things could be and should be a certain way, which was really great for talking activism. Scout was always pushing us to be better and to be the best we could be, just in everything. Scout listened too — sometimes argued, but you know how some people argue but they don't really listen? Scout could listen while still comprehending and understanding, or trying to, at least.

I know Scout had attempted suicide in the past. I've attempted in the past as well, so we'd sometimes talk

Scout that made sure our injured comrade was safe.

That weekend, fascists, namely Casey Jordan Cooper and his friends, covered Midtown and even Georgia Tech in white supremacist propaganda, and they would continue to do so well into March of the next year. Scout was deeply committed to radical community self-defense, always on the lookout, joining us on our sweeps through that part of town, tearing down fascist propaganda faster than any of us; the same multi-tool they carried when they were struck down by cops was used to scrape Nazi stickers from lamp posts and street signs only a few blocks from their dorm. Scout did this knowing that they risked an encounter with fascists.

Writing this, I realize how deeply I will miss our comrade Scout, and how much they did to keep our crew safe. I've spent the last few days hoping that Scout wasn't really dead, that they'd text us and say everything was okay, that the person who died was some other Scout Schultz from Lilburn, Georgia. I still hope it'll happen now, that I will again be able to count on Scout to keep us safe.

But it won't happen. Because Scout was murdered by GTPD. GTPD, who are, like any police body, instruments for the defense of capital and state power.

Don't let coward liberals tell you Scout wasn't a radical. Scout wasn't afraid of it being known: after the election of Donald Trump, the College Democrats hosted a panel with Jason Carter, grandson of Jimmy Carter. Scout and I showed up to start some ruckus, and I had the privilege of seeing Scout loudly and confidently look Jason in the eye to tell him that democratic neoliberalism and electoral politics had completely failed the people. Fuck you, Jason Carter. Fuck you, GTPD. Rise in Power, Scout Schultz.

To the Georgia Tech students who condemn the "violence" of property destruction: Fuck you, too. It's

telling that a “Thank GTPD” Facebook campaign garnered twice as much attention as a Facebook event for Scout’s vigil, a recovery Go Fund Me for the injured cop raised over \$10,000, and students are circulating an ‘I <3 GTPD’ t-shirt someone put up on Teespring. The violence started when a GTPD officer shot Scout with the intention of killing them and succeeded. But no students made a Go Fund Me for Scout’s parents to cover the cost of the funeral. No students designed a shirt to memorialize Scout.

In fact, as students of Georgia Tech, you are in many ways much more violent than anyone who damages a cop car. How many of you are going to take jobs at Lockheed Martin, Boeing, Raytheon, General Dynamics, or Northrop Grunman? How many of you are working on facial recognition technologies, drones, and other expansions of the surveillance state? How many of you will continue to literally grease the wheels of war, poverty, and natural disaster by working in the petroleum industry? Those who torched the car haven’t killed anyone. But how many will you kill? The bombs and planes you labor to perfect have already killed countless in the Global South and Middle East, we have only begun to see how many will die in the coming catastrophe of anthropogenic climate change, and the toys you produce empower the very cops who killed Scout Schultz.

If Georgia Tech is opposed to violence, then why do they allow the defense contractors and petroleum companies – who profit from war and engineer mass violence – to table and recruit on campus? Perhaps it’s because Georgia Tech actually loves violence, as long as it’s the correct, institutional kind – whether it takes the form of a cop gunning down a student dehumanized by their identity and illness or of drones bombing a people dehumanized by distance and nationality.

anyone who is fighting for liberation: in the coming days, fight with Scout’s name on your lips, on your banners, and in your hearts.



Scout and remember their life. Vigil organizers attempted to cut the event short. They restricted speakers to only those affiliated with their organizations, not allowing any voice for Scout's other mourning friends and comrades. This was a clear attempt to sanitize Scout's memory and position themselves as Scout's allies, rather than representatives of the very power structure Scout was resisting, the same power structure that eventually killed them.

Friends and comrades of Scout were undeterred, shouting from their places in the crowd. Their shouts were cries of mourning as well as denouncements of Georgia Tech and its police. As this was happening, a group of mourners gathered with banners and flags, and began chanting, before breaking away into a march.

The crowd, which grew to over one hundred people, marched through the Georgia Tech campus, drumming, shouting, and lighting fireworks, before gathering around several cops and their cruiser near the campus police station. Tension escalated as the police antagonized the crowd, before beating and violently detaining several protesters as the demonstrators attempted to defend themselves and each other.

During the conflict, a police cruiser was lit on fire and several cruiser windows were smashed. The demonstration was an expression of grief for Scout's death, and rage at the systems that led to Scout's murder. The protesters were not "outside agitators" as some claim. They were people who cared deeply about Scout. They were students and community members, anarchists and lgbtq+ activists. They were people fighting for the same things Scout fought for.

To anyone who is enraged, grieving, or who stands against the police and the murderous system they protect, we call for actions in solidarity with our fight here in Atlanta. To

REMEMBERING MEANS FIGHTING

On September 16, anarchist, anti-fascist, engineering student, and queer activist Scout Schultz was shot and killed by police on Georgia Tech campus in Midtown Atlanta. This loss has shaken Scout's friends and family and terrorized many others, including activists, queer youth, and those with mental health concerns across campus and the city at large. Two weeks after Scout's murder, Scout's lover and close friend Dallas Punja took their own life. (Both Scout and Dallas used they/them pronouns.) Dallas described being traumatized by police sirens and police lights after Scout's killing. These two tragic deaths drive home what is at stake in the conflict that pits anarchists and queer youth against police and the repressive society they uphold: it is a question of survival itself.

In the following account, we analyze the strategies that the authorities and their flunkies are using to suppress the reaction to Scout's murder. The forces of order aim to punish the students and anyone else thought to have participated in the rebellion that took place on the Georgia Tech campus two days after Scout was killed. The long-term goal is more ambitious: they want to make revolt unthinkable, rendering us morally incapable of responding appropriately to the murders and oppression they inflict on us. This is not about the machinations of police and bureaucrats on a single campus, but an entire repressive society.

These reflections are dedicated to angry, scared, and desperate people everywhere. Even if we haven't met you yet, we care about you. The first and most important thing you can do to help create a better world is to survive. Thank you for everything you've done to survive until now, whatever you had to do. Let's find each other and create a world without police or homophobia, in which education is not a commodity and human life is not held cheap.

The Execution

On September 16, a phone call was made to the Georgia Tech Police Department describing a "man [sic] with long hair, carrying what appears to be a knife and maybe a gun." Later, the Georgia Bureau of Investigation would claim that it was Scout who made this call.

Around midnight, four Georgia Tech police officers encountered Scout, who was walking barefoot and carrying a small multi-tool. In a video posted online, Scout yells at the officers to shoot, and they oblige. Scout is shot in the heart and dies. Suicide notes were found in Scout's apartment. This immediately became important for the repressive strategy, as the police, administration, and many students began to deploy the narrative of "suicide by cop," reframing Scout as the attacker and the police as the true victims.



RESISTANCE FOR SCOUT: FIGHTING IN THEIR NAME

On the night of Saturday, September 16th, the Georgia Tech Police murdered Scout Schultz. Scout was an anarchist, an activist, and the president of the Georgia Tech Pride Alliance. They fought for police abolition, an end to capitalism, and freedom from state control. Scout (who used they/them pronouns and identified as nonbinary, bisexual and intersex) was a beloved member of their communities, at Georgia Tech and throughout Atlanta. Some may say that Scout's murder was justified, because they were carrying a multi-tool that looked like a knife to GTPD officers, or because they were walking towards the police, or for any number of other reasons.

But police murder is never justified, and neither are the police as an institution. Simply put: the police serve as an occupying force. Modern policing developed from patrols to catch runaway slaves and forces to suppress working class organization. As an institution, the police have never abandoned this social function of maintaining the status quo of oppression and terrorizing marginalized people. On Saturday night when Scout was executed, the Georgia Tech Police Department was doing its job.

On the Sunday afternoon after Scout was shot in the heart and killed, flowers were laid on Georgia Tech's campus near where they died. Starting on Sunday night, multiple banners were dropped throughout the city mourning Scout, calling for solidarity, and denouncing the police.

On Monday evening a vigil was held on campus to mourn

across the country into silence, serving as a warning shot against the rebellious energy of the angry and desperate everywhere. Or they could ignite more expressions of love and outrage, becoming an inspiration to revolutionaries for many years. Let's be intelligent and creative. Rather than waiting for large crowds to join us, we have to create the conditions in which people can come together in mourning and courage, so that no one ever again must die like Scout, Dallas, and all the other people killed by this homophobic, repressive society.

LET'S GET GOING. THE PAST DEPENDS ON IT.



The Consequences

The following Monday, September 18, hundreds of students, workers, faculty, and bereaved friends gathered at the Kessler Campanile at Georgia Tech to hold a vigil for Scout. Many young people were crying and holding candles. It quickly became clear that this vigil was also a part of the repressive strategy, as administrators and student bureaucrats refused to allow Scout's closest friends to speak. The event became a photo opportunity for an administration determined to conceal Scout's death beneath a veneer of unity and campus pride.

After twenty minutes, the event managers declared that the vigil was over. Many people in the crowd were confused, others angry. A large section of the crowd began yelling about the police, the underfunded counseling facilities, the toxic culture of campus life. Around 100 people departed from the vigil, most donning masks, and confronted the police outside of GTPD headquarters. There, police attacked the procession and were attacked in return. In the ensuing melee, the police arrested three people and beat many more; a police cruiser was set on fire. The arrestees were charged with felonies and the corporate media posted their mugshots on television and internet outlets.

We Heart GTPD: Setting the Stage for Repression

The following morning, the Georgia Tech Marksman Club was already present on campus with tables and chalk. Their signs read "We Love You GTPD" and similar messages. They encouraged students to chalk positive messages to the police on the sidewalk. Online, a fundraiser was launched for the police department, which raised nearly

twice as much money as the fundraiser for the arrestees. T-shirts reading “I <3 GTPD” began selling.

The campus administrators deployed a disingenuous discourse about “outside agitators,” anarchists, and anti-fascists who had invaded the campus intent on destruction. This justified the mass deployment of alerts and emails to faculty and students framing what had occurred and an intense militarization of campus as police, federal agents, undercover officers, and helicopters encircled the area for the rest of the week.

Starting immediately, the neo-fascist organization Identity Evropa resumed “#ProjectSeige,” posting stickers and posters around campus and the surrounding areas, ostensibly hoping to utilize the outrage drummed up by GTPD and campus administration as a recruitment opportunity. This symbiotic relationship between the administration, the police, and an explicitly white supremacist organization is worth noting.

On the Georgia Tech subReddit, a popular online forum for students and faculty alike, the discourses of police, campus liberals, and neo-Nazis commingled. “Suicide by cop” and “anti-antifa” rhetoric went uncontested for days.

The Daily Caller, a far-right news website run by Fox News’ Tucker Carlson, argued that the revolt on campus did not in fact emerge from outsiders, but from the student body itself. Some sections of the far right are interested in fostering the perception that universities across the country are developing an insurgent left-wing culture, typified by the anti-fascist revolts at UC Berkeley. The strategy behind this argument is to plant the idea that in order to defend the “American way of life,” it is necessary to crack down on student organizing groups and supposedly liberal educators and curricula.

Several left-wing and progressive student groups

and neighborhoods of their diversity, and community colleges are being bought by larger universities like GSU, it is probably true that not everyone who showed up to grieve the loss of their friend can afford higher education.

But we cannot look to legitimizing factors like identity, neighborhood, occupation, and the like to justify taking the sort of action that Scout’s death demands of us to ensure that the police never dare murder another person. The “outsiders” who stood up for Scout have justified their own behavior rather than seeking the approval of administrators who wish to excuse murder. It is that fact—the self-legitimizing anarchy of those who rebel—that has made them outsiders in the eyes of authorities who intend to dictate the discourse and monopolize the legitimate use of force.

Defending Scout’s Memory

We have to respond to all these provocations by regaining the initiative. Scout was an anarchist, an anti-fascist, and a queer activist on and off campus. Only by continuing to advance a diverse and multifaceted revolt against all the economic and police controls in this society can we defend ourselves and each other against further repression. When the campus administration and the Atlanta area police are forced to respond to crises of legitimacy, finding themselves embroiled in scandals and hostilities, they will be unable to come knocking on our doors or drag us out of classrooms. Efforts to support arrestees have been ongoing and organized, but they must continue until the charges are dropped or the trials are adjourned. The bail fund must be replenished with donations and fundraising efforts of all kinds.

Scout’s memory and the revolt taking place in Scout’s name could be used to blackmail young people

following the vigil on September 18 and who invaded campus again that Friday for a vigil. The march was led by gender-queer and non-binary youth behind a “DEFEND LGBTIA” banner. Are these people not allowed to react to the execution of their friend?

The outsiders are “crazy.” Online and in official statements to the press, students and authorities have relentlessly argued that Scout’s suicidal demeanor justified their execution. For them, this simple reality closes the book on the incident and anyone who says otherwise is either opportunistically attacking the engineering school or is simply another crazy person in need of a reality check.

The outsiders are anarchists and anti-fascists. Identity Evropa, the GT Marksman Club, GTPD, and the school president were quick to blame anarchists and anti-fascists for the burning of the cruiser and the clashes with police. Liberals and progressive groups have echoed their claims. Is it true that only those without any political convictions have a right to enter Georgia Tech campus?

The outsiders are service workers, unemployed people, homeless people, manual laborers, and single parents. Many GT students aspire to work for weapons manufacturers or technology companies. Their insistence that demonstrators have come from “outside campus” has cultural connotations: now that GT is so expensive, and the adjacent neighborhood so gentrified, and the campus culture so passive and reactionary, it must be the plebian elements in the city at large or even from the suburbs who caused the violence.

In a sense, all this is true. Now that the factories on Howell Mill have been transformed into luxury condos, the manufacturing facilities in Mechanicsville are rotting empty, and public housing is shuttered, it must be the case that many of those enraged by Scout’s murder do not live on campus. Now that the HOPE scholarship has been gutted, anti-immigrant laws continue to drain campuses

discreetly distanced themselves from any proportional response to Scout’s murder, submitting paltry demands to the administration. Many members of these groups are well-meaning, but any willingness to collaborate with administrators and police will be used to pathologize those who refuse to collaborate, enabling the authorities to portray them as unreasonable, dangerous, and possibly insane.

On Friday, September 22, when a small group of Scout’s friends attempted to hold a vigil and sit-in at the counseling center, police shut down the campus. Classes and interviews were canceled, helicopters circled overhead, and administrators encouraged teachers to cancel classes, claiming falsely that “antifa” was going to start a riot. Instead, undercover police attempted to intimidate the crowd while right-wing students yelled “Harambe” jokes at mourners—an alt-right racist dog whistle referring to a gorilla shot and killed when a child entered its enclosure.

GTPD Begins Rounding up Students

In the days following the revolt, GTPD began posting blurry photos on their Twitter feed of alleged participants. Nearly all of those pictured were black and many of the pictures seemed useless apart from fostering the impression that the crowd was composed predominantly of non-students and “outsiders.” At the same time, campus police directed students to Leedir.com where they could anonymously submit footage and photos of the event.

On September 27, an interdepartmental operation took place in which APD, GSUPD, and GTPD arrested a Georgia State University student on charges of misdemeanor inciting a riot for allegedly participating in the previous week’s demonstration. Two days later, on September 29, another GSU student was pulled from class

and given identical charges. On October 2, a third GSU student was arrested.

The GT administration and police department hope to round up as many participants in the September 18 demonstration as they can. Regardless of whether these charges stick, they aim to create a chilling effect on the GT campus and potentially on college campuses across the country.

The administrators want their police to be able to kill a student on campus without any scandal erupting. This is unprecedented in recent US history, but the norm in places like Indonesia and Belarus. Now, they are arresting non-students to play on the fanatical micro-nationalism they have cultivated on campus, which they previously used to rationalize the brutal gentrification of the Home Park neighborhood where GT is located.

Leedir, LiveSafe, and Techno-Policing

The administration on campus and the police have been using LiveSafe and Leedir, two tech startups, to facilitate the repressive process.

LiveSafe: crafting a reactionary narrative in real-time

The administrators are encouraging students, faculty, and campus police to use the LiveSafe platform. According to their website, “students, faculty, and staff are deputized to provide crowdsourced intelligence, while campus security can send mass emergency notifications through LiveSafe’s easily integrated command dashboard.” With this tool, the authorities were able to instruct students to return to their dorm rooms and stay off campus, insisting that a “violent protest” was underway and students were in danger. Across campus, young people could be seen either flocking to the

sight of the burning car, or running fearfully to their rooms or cars. In this way, an informal curfew was enforced. Since then, the authorities have been able to use LiveSafe to draw potential snitches to their other tool of choice: Leedir.

Leedir: weaponizing photography and film

Leedir is a tool developed by CitizenGlobal, an LA tech startup whose claim to fame is using this technology to coordinate data analysis in the wake of the Boston Marathon Bombing and to repress young people in Santa Barbara for revolting against the police during Deltopia in 2014. Leedir enables a client such as GTPD to refine the data aggregated from social media posts, news articles, online videos and photography, CCTV footage, and anonymously submitted media. Where LiveSafe deputizes individuals directly, hoping to transform everyone into a cop, Leedir weaponizes the data produced even by unwilling collaborators, gathering data and collecting submissions to host “in the cloud” using Amazon Web Services. A few years ago, when campus unrest erupted in Keene, NH, Leedir was used to make 25 additional arrests.

Who Are the Outsiders?

In the weeks following the revolt, a clear picture is beginning to emerge about the “outsiders” that the administration and police are seeking out.

The outsiders are black people. Georgia Tech has already pushed the black population out of Home Park in its attempts to compete with Georgia State and other campuses to gentrify downtown.

The outsiders are queer. Student representatives, administration, neo-fascists, and good liberals have all claimed that it was “outsiders” who started the revolt